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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 18, 1981

MEMORANDUM

TO: Ed Meese

FROM: G. A. Keyworth

*for President*

Dr. Donald S. Fredrickson, the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has submitted to the President a letter (copy attached) announcing his intention to resign his position, effective July 1. The purpose of this memo is to urge that the President not accept this resignation.

Fredrickson's decision is presumably based on the perception that the Administration does not support him without qualification. Although Secretary Schweiker has been verbally quite supportive, Fredrickson's formal renomination went to the Hill only last week and OPM is now refusing to allow Fredrickson to retire from the PHS Commissioned Corps and join the SES.

I think this Administration should not lose this man. In my opinion, he is probably the single most effective agency head in the entire government, having helped guide NIH for six years to its position as the world's preeminent biomedical research institution. NIH is a symbol of this Nation's scientific leadership at a time when our scientific and technological competitiveness is in question. I, personally, would depend a great deal on Fredrickson to help guide the Administration's science and technology policies and programs.

Politically, Fredrickson should be entirely acceptable. He was appointed NIH Director by the Ford Administration and is widely admired by Congress and the medical and scientific communities. Secretary Schweiker has indicated to me that he shares this assessment. I believe that Dr. Fredrickson's institutional loyalty will permit us this opportunity to retain his unique capabilities.

Attachment:  
a/s

*^ Sent to us by Denver  
Praeger. arriving 6/19  
9:30 am*

cc: Martin Anderson  
Pendleton James